## **CANON TABLES ON PAPYRUS\***

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Of all the works of Eusebius of Caesarea none has been transmitted in so great a number of copies as his *Canones evangeliorum*, together with the letter to a certain Carpianus which explains their use. It is obvious why that should be so. Invented as a tool for exegetical studies of the Evangelists, they served their purpose only in combination with the Gospel text itself, and so they have come to share the constant demand for copies of the Holy Writ.

If the Canon Tables could not do without the Gospels, the Gospel Book, intended as it primarily was for use in the divine service, could do without the Canon Tables. Yet, we find the Canon Tables all through the centuries added to practically all Medieval Gospel Books as a frontispiece. Apparently, they were thought of as something more than just a numerical index—a computer of sorts. By listing the numbers of all the sections into which the four Gospels had been divided, the Eusebian synopsis constituted a mathematical epitome of Christ's message of salvation, in somewhat the same way as the Christogram stood for the full name of the Lord.

There is reason to believe that Eusebius himself was not unaware of such a mystical implication of his invention. His professed rationale was to demonstrate how the four Evangelists related to one another by registering in Canon I the sections common to all of them, in Canons II to IV those common to three of them, and in Canons V to IX those common to two only; finally, by assembling in Canon X the section numbers for which there

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<sup>1</sup>Å. Puech, *Histoire de la littérature grecque chrétienne*, III (Paris, 1930), 175 ends his description of the Eusebian Gospel synopsis

were no parallels at all. However, with this division he did not exhaust all the theoretically possible combinations. He omitted the threefold agreements between Mark, Luke, and John, and the twofold between Mark and John. The hidden reason for his limiting the Canones to ten must have been the particular significance attached in ancient numerology to that figure. Just as according to St. Irenaeus (Adv. haer., III, 11) there had to be four Gospels, neither more nor less, because the number four conformed to the cardinal points of the Universe, so the Canon Tables attained a similar degree of perfection by being ten.<sup>2</sup> Since Pythagoras, the numbers "four" and "ten" had been considered to be mutually connected by mathematical laws.3 Eusebius himself refers to it in his Oration in Praise of Constantine, delivered in 335 at the occasion of the Emperor's Tricennalia: "... the number four produces the number ten. For the aggregate of one, and two, and three, and four, is ten."4 Later in the same speech he elaborates further: "... the number ten, which contains the end of all numbers, and terminates them in itself, may truly be called a full and perfect number, as comprehending every species and every measure of numbers, proportions, concords, and harmonies."5 The restriction of the Canon Tables to ten

by stating: "Certains manuscrits nous en ont conservé les *Canons*"—if anything, an understatement.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., VI, 14. A Select Library, 589. Drake, op. cit. 93.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> As previously suggested in my paper "The Beginning of Book Decoration," *Essays in Honor of Georg Swarzenski* (Chicago, 1951), 16.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>P. Kucharski, Etude sur la doctrine pythagoricienne de la tétrade (Paris, 1952), 31–32. G. Kirk and J. Chr. Raven, The Presocratic Philosophers, 2nd ed. (Cambridge, 1964), 230. C. Butler, Number Symbolism (New York, 1970), 1–11. V. F. Hopper, Medieval Number Symbolism (New York, 1969), 33 f.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup>Op. cit., VI, 5 (Die griechischen christlichen Schriftsteller, 7. Eusebius' Werke, I, ed. I. Heikel [Leipzig, 1902], 207). The translation quoted from A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church, N.S. 1 (New York, 1890), 587. Cf. also H. Drake, In Praise of Constantine, University of California Publications, Classical Studies, XV (Berkeley, 1976), 91.

thus made them particularly well suited to be a "harmony" of the life and teaching of Jesus Christ.<sup>6</sup>

In conformity with the mystical overtones attached to Eusebius' synopsis, we find it regularly mounted in richly decorated arcades which gave it an appearance of loftiness. None of the Gospel books provided with Canon Tables, which Eusebius ordered the calligraphers and illuminators of his scriptorium in Caesarea to produce, has survived. But there is reason to believe that the Etschmiadzin Gospels of 989 may give us an approximate idea of what they looked like.7 Extended over seven pages and ending on the last verso with a colophon page in the form of a tholos alluding to the Holy Sepulchre—another way of emphasizing the symbolic value of the Tables—they function as a propyleum through which we approach the sanctum sanctorum of the Holy Writ.8

It was not least the lavish architectural setting that made the Eusebian invention such a lasting

<sup>6</sup>H. McArthur, "The Eusebian Sections and Canons," The Catholic Biblical Quarterly, 27 (1965), 251, suggests that Eusebius limited his tables to ten, because there were no parallels at all between Mark, Luke, and John and between Mark and John only. However, this is not the case. There are at least a few episodes in the life of Jesus which are told in the last three Gospels, but not in the first. The sudden appearance of the risen Christ to all the Apostles described in Lk. 24:36 ff. and In. 20:19 ff. has been assigned by Eusebius to Canon IX, but it is evidently the same incident that Mark reports in 16:14. The perplexity of the Apostles at Jesus' prophecy of his death and resurrection mentioned in Mk. 9:9 and In. 16:17 are both referred to Canon X as being unique readings, but could as well have been set in parallel. Generally speaking, the number of Canons depends upon how the sections are delimited. In his section division Eusebius is not concerned about keeping the different events strictly apart. He fails, for example, to divide the long section Jn. 8:21-10:15, assigning it in its entirety to Canon X, as if there were no parallels to it in the other Gospels. Yet the healing of the blind man by Christ who touches his eyes with saliva described by Jn. 9:6 occurs in Mk. 8:23 as well. It, too, is assigned to Canon X. Admittedly, the accounts of Jesus' life and sayings found in Mark and John only, or in Mark, Luke, and John only, are not very numerous. Nevertheless, Eusebius might well have allowed them to form two more short Tables had he wanted to do so for the sake of completeness.

<sup>7</sup>This assumption, first put forward in my *Die spätantiken Kanontafeln*, 65 ff., seems now to be generally accepted. Cf. K. Wessel, art "Kanontafeln," *RBK*, 3 (1978), cols. 927 ff. with an upto-date bibliography.

<sup>8</sup>There has been a substantial increase in the number of Medieval copies of the Eusebian *tholos* motif thanks to the publications of previously unknown Ethiopian Gospel Books by Jules Leroy, "L'évangéliaire éthiopien du couvent d'Abba Garima et ses attaches avec l'ancien art chrétien de Syrie," *CahArch*, 11 (1960), 131–43; *idem*, "Un nouvel évangéliaire éthiopien illustre du monastère d'Abba Garima," *Synthronon*, *Bibliothèque des CahArch*, 2 (1968), 75–87, *idem*, "Recherches sur la tradition iconographique des canons d'Eusebe en Ethiopie," *CahArch*, 12 (1962), 173–204 and Marilyn Heldman, *Miniatures of the Gospels of Princess Zir Ganela*, an Ethiopic Manuscript dated A.D. 1400/01 (unpub. diss., Washington Univ., St. Louis, 1972), *passim*.

and worldwide success. We find elaborately decorated Canon Tables not only in the Greek manuscripts of the Gospels, but in those of practically all the languages into which the Gospels were translated in the first six centuries of the Christian era. There are Latin, Syriac, Gothic, Armenian, Georgian, and Ethiopic Gospel Books with Canon Tables. Dependent upon the time and country in which they were produced, they constitute an unparalleled collection of patterns and styles, the study of which forms an important chapter in the history of book illumination.

Only one country, Egypt, is an exception. In the Coptic Gospel Books—whether in the Sahidic or the Bohairic dialect—the Canon Tables are either conspicuously absent or, if they do occur, are treated quite simply, without the usual architectural setting.9 This is true of three illuminated manuscripts of the late twelfth or early thirteenth century—in Paris, Bibliotheque Nationale, Copte 13, in London, British Library, Oriental 1315, and Vatican Library, Copto 9. Two of these, the ones in Paris and the Vatican, are deluxe products with miniatures and title pages painted in gold and full color, which makes the simplicity of their Gospel harmony all the more conspicuous.<sup>10</sup> The reason for the lack of architectural Canon Tables in the Coptic Gospel Books is more difficult to determine. One possible explanation would be that the Coptic versions of the Gospels were made from ancient Greek Gospel manuscripts which had not yet any Canon Tables and the Egyptian Church, in its conservatism, remained faithful to that tradition.11 Another might be that the Copts, being monophysites, had little sympathy for the Eusebian synopsis because they suspected its author of pro-Arian tendencies.11a

In view of the restrictive attitude of Coptic Christendom toward the Eusebian Canon Tables, it comes as a surprise that at least a few fragments of architecturally mounted Canon Tables from a Greek Gospel Book have been found on Egyptian soil. They belong to the collections of the Metro-

<sup>9</sup>On the occurrence of Canon tables in Coptic Gospel Books, see *The Coptic Version of the New Testament in the Northern Dialect*, I ed. George Horner (Oxford, 1898), passim.

11a As suggested to me by Professor David W. Johnson.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup>Horner, op. cit., XLI-XLIV, LVIII-LX and LXXII-LXXIV. J. Leroy, Les manuscrits coptes et coptes-arabes illustrés (IFBey, Bibl. arch. et hist., XCVI [Paris, 1974]), 113 ff. and 148 ff. Neither Leroy, nor H. Buchthal and O. Kurz, A Handlist of Illuminated Oriental Christian Manuscripts (London, 1942) quote any Coptic Canon tables.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> On the Coptic versions of the Gospels, cf. Bruce Metzger, *The Early Versions of the New Testament* (Oxford, 1977), 99–141.

politan Museum of Art and came to light during the excavations conducted in 1912–14 in Western Thebes.<sup>12</sup> Published in 1926, they have not yet received the attention which they undoubtedly deserve from both biblical scholars and art historians (figs. 1 and 2).

The findspot of these Canon Tables is one of considerable antiquity. During the Middle Kingdom a number of graves for members of the higher Theban aristocracy were cut into the northern slopes of what is today Sheik Abd-el-Kurneh Hill, halfway between Medinet-Habu and the Valley of the Kings.<sup>13</sup> Foremost among these tombs was that of the vezier Daga, whose monolithic sarcophagus was excavated by Maspero in 1883 and brought to the Bulaq Museum in Cairo.14 The entrance to the tomb was distinguished by a monumental, porticoed front, the openings of which can be seen in part today. From the entrance a corridor, excavated straight into the hillside, led into a subterranean square hall and thence into a narrow cave, cut deep into the mountain; it is in this cave that the sarcophagus was discovered.

Egyptian grave sites of the Pharaonic period became favorite dwelling places for Christian hermits, and it was in and around the tomb of Daga that in the late sixth century an anchorite named Epiphanius took up residence with some of his followers. 15 Together they transformed the site into a modest monastery by dividing the outer vestibule into a set of smaller rooms and by adding two freestanding towers. Apparently Epiphanius chose to install himself in the subterranean square chamber, for it was on the floor of this room, more precisely in a dust hole in its northeast corner, that a great number of his personal papers were discovered. Among them were the scattered fragments of a Gospel Book with the Eusebian Gospel harmony (figs. 1 and 2).

In spite of their late date, the writing material of the fragments is papyrus, not parchment. The definitive switch from roll to codex and from papyrus to parchment had already taken place in most

of the ancient world when Eusebius composed his Canones. It may not, however, have happened much earlier, since according to a passage in St. Jerome's letter to Marcella (Ep. 34,1) two of Eusebius' successors on the episcopal throne, Acacius and Euzoius, were still busy "restoring on parchment" parts of the library of Pamphilius.<sup>16</sup> Upon ordering from Eusebius fifty biblical codices for the churches in the new capital, Constantine, not by accident but expressly, states that they should be carefully written èν διφθέραις έγκατασκεύοις, "on prepared parchment," and there is reason to believe that among them were Gospel Books with Canon Tables.<sup>17</sup> From then on the choice of parchment became a matter of course when Gospel Books with Canon Tables were produced. Moreover, parchment was the material best suited for decoration with opaque colors.

In Egypt, too, finer biblical manuscripts were written on parchment, as shown for example by the Glazier codex of the Acts in the Morgan Library or the Freer Gospels in Washington, both of the early fifth century. Nevertheless, the time-honored indigenous writing material was not entirely discarded. In Kurt Aland's lists of Greek New Testament manuscripts on papyrus there are quite a few fragments with Gospel texts, datable as late as the sixth, seventh, or eighth century. And it is to that category of papyrus codices that the

<sup>16</sup> In our context it does matter if the passage about Eusebius' successors is by St. Jerome himself or was added as a gloss, as suspected by J. Hilberg in his edition of S. Eusebii Hieronimi opera. Epistularum pars I, CSEL, LIV (1910), 260. Euzoius' role in restoring the library of Pamphilius is confirmed by a colophon in a manuscript in Vienna quoted by C. H. Roberts in The Codex, ProcBrAc, 40 (1956), 200 from L. Traube, Vorlesungen und Abhandlungen, I (Munich, 1909), 94.

<sup>17</sup> Eusebius, Vita Constantini, IV, 36, GCS, LVII, ed. F. Winkelmann (Berlin, 1975), 133–34. The long-lasting battle concerning the authenticity of the documents quoted in the Vita Constantini has finally been settled in favor of Eusebius, as shown by F. Winkelmann, "Zur Geschichte des Autenticitätsproblem der Vita Constantini," Klio, 40 (1962), 187–243. So already earlier I. Daniele, I documenti Constantiniani della Vita Constantini di Eusebio di Caesarea, AnalGreg, XIII (Rome, 1938), 170–71.

<sup>18</sup> J. Plummer, *The Glazier Collection of Illuminated Manuscripts* (New York, 1966), 7–8. H. Sanders, *The New Testament Manuscripts in the Freer Collection*, I, University of Michigan, Humanistic Series, IX (London, 1918).

<sup>19</sup> F. Kenyon, "The Papyrus Book," *The Library*, 4th ser., VIII (1926), 121–55.

<sup>20</sup>Kurzgefasste Liste der griechischen Handschriften des Neuen Testaments, Arbeiten zur neutestamentlichen Textforschung, 1 (Berlin, 1963), 29–33, and its continuation in Materialen zur neutestamentlichen Handschriftenkunde, ibid, 3 (Berlin, 1969). Also J. van Haelst, Catalogue des papyrus litteraires juifs et chrétiens, Université de Paris, série Papyrologie, 1 (Paris, 1976), 329–466. In the latter the fragments with Canon Tables are listed, under the heading "Textes patristiques," as no. 650. Discovered at the same

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> H. E. Winlock and W. E. Crum, *The Monastery of Epiphanius at Thebes* (Publications of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, Egyptian Expedition, ed. A. M. Lythgoe), I-II (New York, 1926). In the second volume the Greek Ostraca and Papyri have been edited by H. G. Evelyn-White. To him we owe the description and interpretation of our fragments on pp. 122–23 and 302–05. Their present inv. no. is X455 (not 14.I.198–9)

<sup>13</sup> N. de Gary Davies, *Five Theban Tombs* (Archaeological Survey of Egypt, ed. F. L. Griffith, XXI. memoir [London, 1913]).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Davies, op. cit., 28–39.

<sup>15</sup> Winlock and Crum, The Monastery of Epiphanius, chap. II.

fragments, which we shall now examine, from a Gospel Book with Canon Tables belong.

Their total number amounts to thirteen (figs. 1–2).<sup>21</sup> They consist of: first, one small oblong slip from a leaf which on both sides had parts of Eusebius' letter to Carpianus; second, three major irregular pieces from another leaf with Canon Tables on both sides; third, three tiny scraps which to judge from the double lines in red on two of them, are likely to come from the same, or another, leaf with Canon Tables; and finally, six fragments without text, but with remains of decoration of uncertain use.

The language of the manuscript is Greek. It is true that most of the literary documents found in the excavation of the monastery are Coptic, which must have been the idiom of the hermits living there. However, Epiphanius, to judge from his personal correspondence, also mastered Greek, which moreover, throughout the Early Christian period remained the obligatory liturgical language.<sup>22</sup> Our fragments confirm this fact.

What remains of the text betrays the hand of a trained scribe, albeit not a first-rate one. He writes a fairly fluent uncial, slightly slanting to the right, with letters of varying size, not always firmly planted on the line. One peculiarity is his addition of an extra "s"-like stroke after some of the numbers in the Canon Tables.<sup>23</sup> As to the overall character of the hand, the scribe writes not in the Coptic uncial so common to papyri of this period, but rather in a somewhat degenerate "biblical" uncial.<sup>24</sup>

The oblong slip from the letter of Eusebius to Carpianus has on the recto eight lines with about four letters each. The line on top begins in the middle of the first sentence of Eusebius' prologue and must have been preceded by a line with the opening words 'Αμμονιος μεν ὁ Αλεξανδρευς, etc.

time as these, but in another location, the Metropolitan Museum expedition also found fragments of a Gospel lectionary, on which, see *The Monastery of Epiphanius*, II, 120–21 and 301, and van Haelst, *op. cit.*, no. 365, with bibliography.

Written in the usual scriptura continua, the lines of this page can be calculated to have had an average of thirty-three letters. Since the text continues on the verso of the fragment, we are able to estimate that the eight lines partly preserved were followed by ten more, and that the entire text on this page consisted of some 620-30 letters. This is about onethird of the approximately 2100 letters of the whole prologue. One would have expected the remaining two-thirds to have filled the following two pages, the normal layout of the prologue in a great many Gospel Books. Surprisingly, what remains of the text on the verso contradicts this assumption, for here the scribe suddenly switches to another layout (fig. 3). By increasing the size and the spacing of the letters, as well as the distance between the lines, he now writes only about twenty letters per line. If he had continued in this way, he would have needed not two, but four more pages to copy the whole text. That many pages would be unique. It makes practically inevitable the assumption that he made use of an abbreviated version of the second part of the prologue. Such shorter versions exist in two Coptic Gospel Books and may have been an Egyptian peculiarity.25

In switching to the more space-consuming script on the verso, the scribe also reduced the height of the column of text, which is why on top of the fragment a broad border painted in red ochre has been preserved. Since it seems unlikely that the border ran only along the upper part of the text column, we may safely assume that originally it framed the text on all four sides. As a parallel, one may cite the decoration of the Eusebian letter in the Codex Rossanensis (fig. 4).<sup>26</sup> Most probably the recto page, too, had some sort of frame, although none of it survives.

One more problem connected with the layout of the letter to Carpianus should not be passed over. With the help of the Canon tables, Evelyn-White in his publication calculated the size of the leaves in the manuscript to have measured approximately  $27 \times 22.4$  cm. The text on the verso, including its frame, can, however, scarcely have filled more than half that area, and about the same applies to the recto. In other words, the scribe has

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Plates VIII-IX in *The Monastery of Epiphanius* (note 12 *supra*), II (1926) show only eight pieces, and there is in the text no mention of the other five now available and included in figs. 1 and 2.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> H. E. Winlock in *The Monastery of Epiphanius*, I, 143.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> They are to be seen most clearly on the recto in the first column of Canon II after the second numeral from the top  $(p)M\Gamma$  and on the verso in the first row of Canon V  $\varrho B$ .

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup>On the Coptic type of uncial, see D. Serruys, "Contribution a l'étude des 'Canons' de l'onciale grecque," *Mélanges offerts à M. Emile Chatelain* (Paris, 1910), 497–99, and especially J. Irigoin, "L'onciale grecque de type copte," *JÖBG*, 8 (1959), 21–51. I want to thank Professor Irigoin for having communicated to me in writing his opinion concerning the script of our fragment.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup>The Coptic Version of the New Testament, ed. G. Horner, I, LXXII-LXXIII. A. Hebbelynck, "Les Κεφάλαια et les τίτλοι des Evangiles," Le Museon, 41 (1928), 114 f. Cf. also Harold Oliver, "The Epistle of Eusebius to Carpianus. Textual Tradition and Translation," Novum Testamentum, 3 (1959), 142.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> A. Munoz, *Il codice purpureo di Rossano e il frammento sino*pense (Rome, 1907).

left empty margins of an unusual, not to say puzzling width. It may have been this anomaly that led Evelyn-White to the even stranger assumption that the prologue might have been divided into sections written here and there in the open spaces below the shorter Canons. Apart from being unparalleled, this arrangement as indicated above cannot be reconciled with the relationship of the text on the recto to that on the verso.<sup>27</sup>

The three major fragments carry scattered parts of Canon Tables on both sides. On the recto enough has been preserved to identify the upper part of the second and third columns of Canon II and, divided between two adjacent pieces to the right, parts of Canon III (text fig. A). On the verso of the same two pieces are parts of Canon IV, whereas the third piece has remains of the first two columns of Canon V (text fig. B). It shows that on both sides of the leaf there were three main columns of parallel numbers, on the recto two for Canon II and one for Canon III, on the verso one for Canon IV and two for Canon V. Canons III and IV were both short enough to need only one column of numbers each. For Canons II and V, the longest in the synopsis, even two columns did not suffice. On the recto are the last two thirds of Canon II and on the verso the first two thirds of Canon V.

What can be deciphered, more or less clearly, of the numbers has been carefully transcribed by Evelyn-White in the Metropolitan Museum publication. As he demonstrates, the numbers agree with those printed in the Clarendon Press edition of the Greek New Testament, but for certain notable discrepancies.<sup>28</sup> The scribe's only real slip of the pen occurs at the top of the second column of Canon II, where he wrote ρμγ (143) instead of cμγ (243) in the Matthew row. Of greater interest is the fact that in Canons III and IV all numbers in the row for John are, from some number after seventy and before ninety-one, one digit ahead of the normal

sequence. There can be only one explanation. The Gospel text must have contained the apocryphal pericope of the Woman Taken in Adultery (John 7:53–8:11), which was absent in the Gospel Book of Eusebius as well as in practically all the oldest codices which have been preserved.<sup>29</sup> Not only was it included in our manuscript, but also, and more unusually, it was given a section number of its own, with the result that all the following sections had to be renumbered.<sup>30</sup>

The numerals have been entered in dark brown ink in groups of four within compartments formed by crossing vertical and horizontal lines drawn in red (minium) with the help of a ruler.<sup>31</sup> There are double vertical lines on the outside of each column. Constituting the usual guiding network of all Greek Canon tables, such lines no doubt reflect the author's original scheme. Eusebius must have been familiar with it from Classical astronomic tables, like those copied in the Vatican Ptolemaios, Vat. gr. 1291 (fig. 5).<sup>32</sup>

On the recto the numbers begin on top of the left column right in the middle of Canon II with a comparison between Mt  $\varrho \lambda \xi$  (137), Mk  $\mu \delta$  (44), and Lk  $\varrho \xi \xi$ (167), and it continued down to the bottom of the page with Mt  $c\mu\beta$  (242), Mk  $\varrho\lambda\zeta$  (137), and Lk  $c\mu\theta$  (249), as the continuation of the list in the next column allows us to assume. In other words, the left column held thirty-nine parallels between the synoptics layed out in ten triple squares, of which those in the bottom row had three, instead of four numerals each. The same must have been the case with the thirty-nine parallels which filled the first column of Canon II on the lost opposite page. The remaining parallels of Canon II, partly preserved on top of the third (now middle) column, consisted of thirty-one parallels filling eight triple compartments, again with only three sets of section numbers at the end. It all implies that Canon II in our manuscript contained 109 parallels, instead of the 111 usually allotted to this Canon in the printed

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup>The writing of the text of a prologue in the center of the page with the rest of the parchment left blank is not without some parallels in Byzantine manuscripts. One can cite the three Protheoria pages to Job in Copenhagen, Royal Library, GKS 6, fols. 49, 53 and 78: Hans Belting and Guglielmo Cavallo, *Die Bibel des Niketas*, VeröffAkadHeidelberg, phil.-hist.Kl. (Wiesbaden, 1979), pls. 17–19; also the title page to Hosea in Turin, Biblioteca Nazionale, B.I. 2, fol. 13°: *ibid.*, pl. 9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> The Monastery of Epiphanius, II, 303. Comparing the numerals in the fragments to those in the Clarendon Press Novum Testamentum, Evelyn-White thought that certain numbers in John had been displaced, for they did not follow the numerical order. He indicates this discrepancy in his diagram. However, the order is the same as in most ancient manuscripts, whereas the

<sup>&</sup>quot;correct" numerical order in the printed New Testament is a modern revision.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>29</sup>On the pericope de adultera, often suspected of being an interpolation, see H. Riesenfeld, The Gospel Tradition (Oxford, 1970), 95–110; and U. Becker, Jesus und die Ehebrecherin, ZNW, suppl. 28 (Berlin, 1963). It has been pointed out by Metzger, The Early Versions of the New Testament, 132, that the pericope adultera was introduced into the Bohairic version of the Gospels in the seventh century, i.e., about the same time as our Gospel Book.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>30</sup> Paradoxically, Evelyn-White, *op. cit.*, 304, thinks that the papyrus omitted rather than included the pericope in defiance of the figures of his own diagram, which show the papyrus from Jn 91 on as one digit ahead of the printed standard version.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>31</sup> Nordenfalk, Die spätantiken Kanontafeln, 117–18.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>32</sup> K. Weitzmann, Die byzantinische Buchmalerei des 9. und 10. Jahrhunderts (Berlin, 1935), p. 1, figs. 4-5.

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A. Distribution of Canones on Recto, Canons II and III

Canon II<sup>2</sup>

editions.<sup>33</sup> In this respect our manuscript is likely to have agreed with the original version of Eusebius.<sup>34</sup>

After Canon II follows, in the third column, Canon III, in which Matthew, Luke, and John are compared. Counting only twenty-two parallels, it poses no special layout problems. Parts of the six triple compartments into which its section numbers are set, still exist. In this case only two parallels were left for the last compartment.

Canon IV, which registers the readings common to Matthew, Mark, and John, occupies the left column on the verso. It consisted of twenty-six parallels in seven triple compartments, of which, in the two fragments bordering one another, the right row with the section numbers of John are almost completely preserved.

Canon V follows in the remaining two columns. The comparison now switches from three to two Gospels, Matthew and Luke, with the result that the network has become more widely spaced. The first column must have had thirty-two parallels in eight compartments, to judge from its continuation in the second column with the section numbers  $h\gamma$  (93) and  $\rho\mu$  (145). If this column, as is likely, had the same number of parallels, there were still twenty left for a third column, no doubt found on the next page, now lost. 35

On top of each vertical row of section numbers is a small arch drawn in brown ink inside which the name of the relevant Evangelist is written. A similar larger arch joins the double sidelines of each column. Of this there is just enough preserved to confirm that, like the rest of the framework, it was drawn in red ink. These half-circles created three tympana for the heading of the Canons. Since all the upper part has been lost, the titles are no longer visible, except for two letters in the space on top of Canon III:

# $[K\alpha N\omega N \ \overline{\Gamma}] \\ \epsilon N[\omega \ OI \ T \varrho \epsilon \iota \varsigma]$

In the spandrels between the tympana there are, on the recto, remains of ornamental fillings, drawn in brown ink with inlaid red dots and patches to enliven the design. Along the central tympanon was a linear scroll of some sort, parts of which are preserved at both ends. Along the two outer tympana the arches were filled with a denser graphic pat-

<sup>33</sup> The lower figure implies that the parallels Mt 116–Mk 25–Jn 165 and Mt 116–Mk 25–Jn 177 in Canon II have been rejected in favor of Mt 116–Jn 165 and Mt 116–Jn 177 in Canon V.

tern, consisting of schematized floral motifs, of a type used in Late Antique colophon ornaments. The borders were delineated by heavy red lines, which in the middle of the spandrels run down at a sharp angle. The three patterned arches, each about a centimeter broad, formed regular half circles, drawn with the help of a compass or some other instrument (fig. 6).36 Normally, these would have been supported by columns, or pilasters, with capitals and bases, but here there is no support, only empty spaces between the guiding networks for the numbers. A professional book illuminator would not have left the architectural structures of the Canon Tables so incomplete. Drawn on papyrus and probably by the scribe himself, those to be seen here are little more than poor cousins of the more elaborate structures one normally finds in Gospel Books on parchment. In all their simplicity, however, they display at least a general likeness to the more splendid fragments of Canon Tables on gilt vellum in London, British Library, add. 5111, fols. 10-11, also of the sixth or seventh century (fig. 7),<sup>37</sup> to those of the ninth century in Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Ham. 246, fols. 1–2 (fig. 8)38 or, to take a Latin example of the sixth century, to the newly discovered flyleaf in Bergamo, Biblioteca del Clerico di S. Alessandro, 227 (fig. 9).<sup>39</sup>

The fact that both sides show the same type of triple arcade invites us to assume that there were similarly framed Canon Tables on the missing pages as well. The page facing the recto of our fragment would then have had the first part of Canon II set into the third intercolumniation of its arcade. This would have left the other two openings for Canon

<sup>36</sup> Since no hole can be detected for the supporting leg of the compass, it is perhaps most likely that the scribe made use of a curved object instead. I want to thank Mr. R. B. Trevillian for kindly assisting me in the execution of the reconstruction drawing

ing.

37 On the Canon tables in Add. 5111, in many respects enigmatic, cf. Nordenfalk, *Die spätantiken Kanontafeln*, 127 ff. My tentative dating to the seventh rather than the sixth century has been accepted by E. Kitzinger, "Byzantine Art in the Period Between Justinian and Iconoclasm," *Berichte zum XI. Internationalen Byzantinisten-Kongress* (Munich, 1958), 31–32, repr. in *The Art of Byzantium and the Medieval West. Selected Studies* (Bloomington, 1976), 187–88; and by H. Kessler, in the catalogue to the Metropolitan Museum of Art exhibition, *Age of Spirituality* (New York, 1979), no. 441. The conventional sixth-century date is defended on paleographic grounds by G. Cavallo, *Richerche sulla maiuscola* (Florence, 1967), 98, 104; and by Wessel, in *RBK*, 3, cols. 935–36.

<sup>38</sup> J. Ebersolt, "Miniatures byzantines de Berlin," RA, ser. 4, vol. 6 (1905), 55–70; and Weitzmann, *Die byzantinische Buchmalerei des 9. und 10. Jahrhunderts* (Berlin, 1935), 68. H. Boese, *Die Hamilton-Handschriften in Berlin* (1976).

<sup>39</sup> E. A. Lowe, *Codices latini antiquiores*, Suppl. (Oxford, 1971), no. 1673.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>34</sup>I must postpone further discussion of this point to a forthcoming paper on the different textual versions of the Eusebian synopsis.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>35</sup>The calculation implies that Canon V had eighty-four parallels, not eighty-two, as in most printed editions. Cf. note 33 supra.

I which, as usual, would have been divided into two columns, with thirty-six parallels in each. Similarly, the lost page facing the verso of our fragment must have had the end of Canon V in its first intercolumniation and Canon VI, with its forty-eight parallels, filling the other two. Canons VII, VIII, and IX, each short enough to require only one intercolumniation, are thus likely to have occupied the next triple arcade. On the last page Canon XMt with sixty-two single section numbers, and Canon X<sup>Mk</sup> with nineteen would then have shared the first intercolumniation leaving the other two to Canon X<sup>Lk</sup> with seventy-two and Canon X<sup>Jn</sup> with ninetysix. If this reconstruction, which accords, with the economy of space characteristic of ancient writing practice, is correct, the entire set would have had the following layout:

verso Canon	$\mathbf{I}^{_{1}}$	$\mathbf{I}^2$	$II^1$
recto "	$\Pi^2$	$\Pi^3$	III
verso "	IV	$V^1$	$V^2$
recto "	$V^3$	$VI^1$	$VI^2$
verso "	VII	VIII	IX
recto "	$\mathbf{X}^{\mathbf{Mt}}\mathbf{X}^{\mathbf{Mk}}$	$\mathbf{X}^{\mathrm{Lk}}$	$\mathbf{X}^{\mathbf{J}\mathbf{n}}$

By using only six pages, our series deviates from the seven-page layout which must have been that of the Eusebian archetype:<sup>40</sup>

recto Ca	anon		I 1	$I^2$		
verso	"	$\Pi^1$		$II^2$		$II^3$
recto	"		III		IV	
verso	"	$V^1$		$V^2$		$V^3$
recto	"	$VI^1$		$VI^2$		VII
verso	"	VIII		IX		$X^{Mt}$
recto	"		$X^{Mk}X^{Lk} \\$		$X^{Jn}$	

The divergencies in the layout between the two sets are obviously due to the fact that the Eusebian archetype has alternating double and triple arcades, whereas our set retains triple arcades throughout. Yet, the number of columns into which the longer *Canones* have been divided—two for Canons I and VI, three for Canons II and V—is the same in both cases. In switching to only one type of arcade, our Canon Tables follow a general trend toward uniformity which can be observed in the Canon Tables of the London fragments as well, only that here all the arcades were twofold. Within the development of the Canon Tables, the persistence and even predominance of the triple arcades is an archaism.

Like the Eusebian archetype the set ended on a recto, which makes one wonder how the verso was used. In the archetype of the Armenian and the Ethiopian Canon Tables, it was filled with the *tholos*, which very likely harks back to the Eusebian archetype and which, with its four columns joined under a common roof, symbolizes the complete "harmony" between the Gospels.<sup>41</sup> Though there is no means of ascertaining it, there is a good chance that the scribe responsible for the arcades of the Canon Tables was also able to draw a simplified version of the colophon image.

In one respect our Canon Tables present a feature otherwise unparalleled in the Greek Gospel Books we know. It adds at intervals in the open space between the Tables brief marginal notices concerning the subject matter. Enclosed in a loop line (figs. 1 and 2) and condensed into just a few words, each notice refers to an episode or saying of Jesus indicated by the numbers nearby to the right, i.e., in the second (middle) or in the third (right) column of the Tables. That the first (left) column, too, had similar marginal readings cannot be taken for granted, since on the outside the open "pilaster" would have been only about one centimeter wide, too narrow a space, one would think, for any such entry.

To judge from the notices still preserved, they were fairly irregularly distributed. In what is left of Canon II there is only one such entry. There are two in Canon III, naturally none in Canon IV since it occupies the first column, and eight in Canon V. Although quite a few letters have been lost, the texts have all been deciphered in a satisfactory way by Evelyn-White. They read:

#### in Canon II (fig. A)

Mt 243 (24:3-8)-Mk 138(13:3-8)-Lk 249(21:7-11) "Concerning the end and signs"

#### in Canon III (fig. A)

Mt 1(1:1-16)–Lk 14(3:23-38)–Jn 1(1:1-5) "On the great Lord's Day of the Passover" Mt 64(8:5-12)–Lk 65(7:1-9)–Jn 37(4:46-54) "On the Servant of the Centurion"

#### in Canon V (fig. B)

Mt 3(1:18–19)–Lk 2(2:6–7) "On the Birth of the Lord"

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>40</sup>Concerning the original layout of the Eusebian synopsis, see Nordenfalk, Die spätantiken Kanontafeln, 65 ff.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>41</sup>In most Ethiopian copies the *tholos* carries in the opening between the columns the caption "Harmony of the Canons: how the Four Gospels agree with their sections" (Heldman, *Miniatures of the Gospels of Princess Zir Ganela*, 106). Cf. the similar text in Greek in Venice, Marciana gr. I, 8, fol. 3, and in Vatican Li-

Mt. 25(5:2-3)-Lk 55(6:32-36) "On the Blessing"

Mt 40(5:43-45)-Lk 55(6:32-36) "On loving one's enemy"

Mt 49(6:25-34)-Lk 150(12:22-31) "On 'Take no thought"

Mt 53(7:7–11)–Lk 125(11:9–13) "On 'Knock and it shall be opened unto you'"

Mt 93(10:27–32)–Lk 145(12:2–8) "On Martyrs" Mt 96(10:37–38)–Lk 182(14:25–26) "He who is above(?) mother and father"

Mt 102(16:2–9)–Lk 59(7:18–26) "On those sent by John"

One observes immediately that the first entry for Canon III differs from all the others by referring not to an event or a saying in the Gospels, but to a feast in the ecclesiastical year. The triple parallel Mt-Lk 14-In 1, to which it belongs, is not one of Eusebius' most convincing parallels, for the Old Testament genealogy of Christ according to Matthew and Luke has in a rather strained way been coupled with the lofty opening sentences of John about the Word having become flesh.<sup>42</sup> While the former sections were little suitable as pericopes, the famous beginning of the fourth Gospel was of supreme liturgical importance, for it was read in the Greek Orthodox church on Easter Sunday; it is, in fact, the pericope with which the Synaxarium begins, the marginal notice of our fragment being a direct quotation from its first title.43

At the same time it gives an indication as to the purpose of the other entries as well. They, too, must be references to Gospel readings prescribed for different feasts of the ecclesiastical year. In other words, the Canon Tables have been given a double function: they survey the parallels between the Gospels, and also provide a table of content for pericopes to be read during the divine service. It must be admitted that the Eusebian synopsis was not very appropriate for the latter purpose, since the arrangement of the Canon Tables precluded a

systematic order of the pericopes according to the Calendar, and in addition there was a noticeable difference between the Eusebian sections and the pericopes in that the former were often either too short or too long to cover the latter.

These disadvantages may account for why so far no other example of a combination of Canon Tables with lectionary readings is known to exist. On the other hand, it should be kept in mind that our Gospel Book belongs to a period when lectionaries, or lists of pericopes, for the entire ecclesiastical year had not yet found their definite form. In a Latin Gospel Book of the same time, with strong Eastern connections, the Codex Valerianus in Munich, Staatsbibliothek, Clm. 6224, there are still only brief liturgical notices set into the initials at the beginning of certain pericopes of the text.44 It could be that the notes added to our Canon Tables were derived from a Greek Gospel Book with similarly scattered notices, most likely set into the margin of the Gospel text. In Egypt the final stage is reached in those Medieval Gospel Books that have the lection numbers set in tables of their own, similar to those of the Eusebian synopsis. 45

The idea of adding brief notices of content to the Canon tables is, however, known from other Gospel Books. It occurs in the Old Latin purple codex f in Brescia, which—together with its sister manuscript, the Codex Argenteus in Uppsala—was no doubt written in Ravenna in the early sixth century in the court scriptorium of Theodorich the Great.46 Here each horizontal row of section numbers has the corresponding opening sentence or words, usually taken from the first of the Gospels compared, written to the right, the whole framed by an arcade carried by two columns (fig. 10). In order to accommodate that much text each page usually had space for only four to six parallels, with the result that the whole synopsis had to be extended over some hundred fifty pages, all similarly framed, seventy of which, starting in Canon V, still exist—an incredibly lavish treatment of the Canones feasible only in a workshop supported with royal means. The addition of a full set of initia to

brary, Vat. gr. 364, fol. 13° (Weitzmann, Die byzantinisches Buchmalerei, pls. xvII, 92, LXXXII, 513).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>42</sup>One can only agree with McArthur, "The Eusebian Sections and Canons," 253: "Even a highly developed marginal reference system could be excused for omitting this correlation! Presumably Eusebius linked these [sections] together because they presented the background for the historical figure of Jesus: Matthew and Luke presenting the biological background or ancestry, John presenting the theological background."

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> E. C. Colwell and D. W. Riddle, Prolegomina to the Study of the Lectionary Text of the Gospels (Chicago, 1933), 85. Cf. also M. Solovey, The Byzantine Divine Liturgy (Washington, D.C., 1970), 191; and C. Kucharek, The Byzantine-Slav Liturgy of St. John Chrysostomos (Allendale, N. J., 1971), 440.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>44</sup>G. Leidinger, "Das sogenannte Evangeliarium des heiligen Korbinian," Wissenschaftliche Festgabe zum zwölfhundertjährigen Jubileum des heiligen Korbinian (Munich, 1924), 92 ff.; Lowe, Codices latini antiquiores, IX (1959); no. 1249.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>45</sup> As is the case in Paris, Bibl. Nat., Copte 13, fols. 286 ff. (*The Coptic Version of the New Testament*, ed. Horner, xLIV-XLV).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>46</sup>Lowe, Codices latini antiquiores, III (1938), no. 281; Nordenfalk, Die spätantiken Kanontafeln, 263 ff.; W. Henns, Leitbilder Bibelübersetzung im 5. Jahrhundert, AbhHeid, Philos.-hist. Kl., 1973, pt. 1, p. 15 ff.

the Canon Tables, as we have them here, never served any liturgical purpose; so the system documented in the Brescia codex and that in our fragment are no doubt independent of one another.<sup>47</sup>

Finally, a word about the six small fragments without text but with remains of decoration. Two of them may be parts of a border in red ochre, with rounded projections on the outside and a circular opening with a dot in the middle, like an eye. The similarity in color to the border of the second prologue page suggests that they might come from the lost frame of the recto. Others have a scattered pattern of rings or small strokes in red and black. Evelyn-White's suggestion that they come from "the uninscribed tympana of the second or third columns of any one Canon" is not convincing since there is no parallel anywhere for such a treatment of the Canon Tables. 48 On the whole, there is little hope of identifying the original position of these tiny fragments, especially since all are blank on the back.

The Egyptian origin of the Gospel Book to which the fragments belong is accepted as a matter of course, but it is hardly possible to say more precisely where along the Nile it was produced. As pointed out by W. E. Crum, there must have been no little scribal activity in the Theban region in the centuries before the Arab conquest.<sup>49</sup> Most probably Epiphanius obtained his Gospel Book from some higher ecclesiastical official with a scriptorium at his disposal. Some of the letters addressed to him are from Pnesethius, bishop of Keft, and in one of them the hermit is told: "Be not disappointed regarding the book that is belated. I will send it thee without delay." 50 In another letter found in the monastery, an unknown recipient is presented with a book by a scribe whose hand is rather similar to that of our fragment.<sup>51</sup> A third letter, found in the cell of the priest Elias, mentions a book of prayers, and the recipient is asked: "Send [or return] it to me that I may adorn it."52 The word "adorn" [xoouliv] may refer to the binding only, but that some artistic care was often given to the pages of the manuscripts as well can be seen from a text by Esaias of Scete, in which monks are admonished not to spend much time on the decoration of books they copy.<sup>53</sup> Writing and book decoration, the latter preferably applied with great restraint, apparently went hand in hand. Of this practice, the rather simple treatment of the Canon Tables in the Gospel Book of St. Epiphanius is a good example.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>47</sup>Other Latin Canon tables with a complete set of *initia* exist in two different versions, none exactly the same as in the Codex Brixianus and all without arcade framing. One, Poitiers, Bibliothèque Communale, 17 (65), has been edited by P. Minard, "Témoins inédits de la vieille version latine des Evangiles. Les Canons à *initia* des évangéliaires de Sainte-Croix de Poitiers et de la Trinité de Vendôme," *Revue Bénédictine*, 56 (1945–46), 58–92; the other, Trier Seminarbibliothek, 40, is published by Dom de Bruyne, in his privately printed *Préfaces de la Bible latine* (Namur, 1920), 158–70. On both these series, see B. Fischer, "Bibeltext und Bibelreform," *Karl der Grosse. Lebenswerk und Nachleben*. II. *Das geistige Leben* (Düsseldorf, 1965), 188.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>48</sup> The Monastery of Epiphanius (note 12 supra), II, 302.

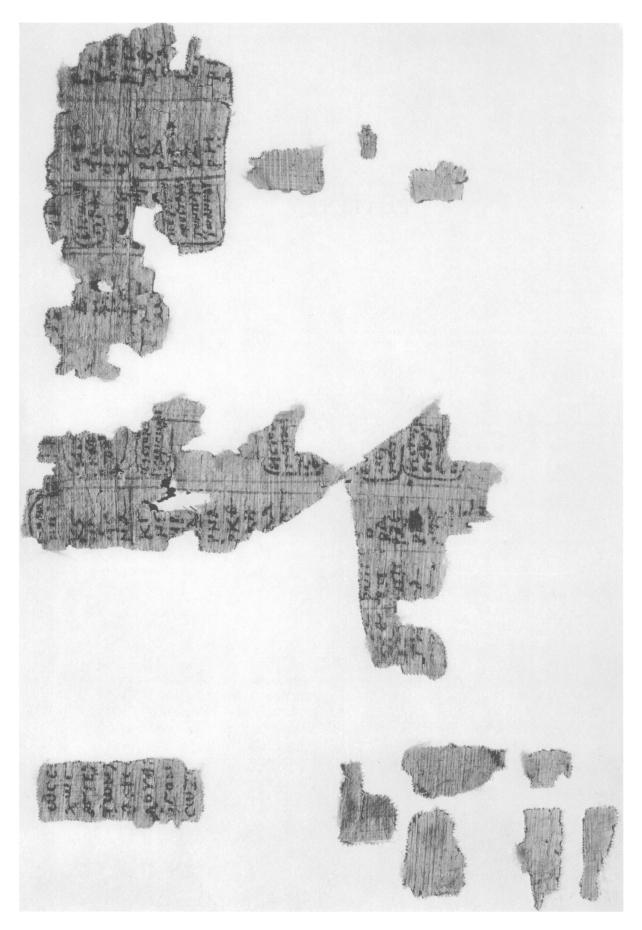
<sup>49</sup> Ibid., I, 193.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>50</sup> Ibid., II, 254, no. 382.

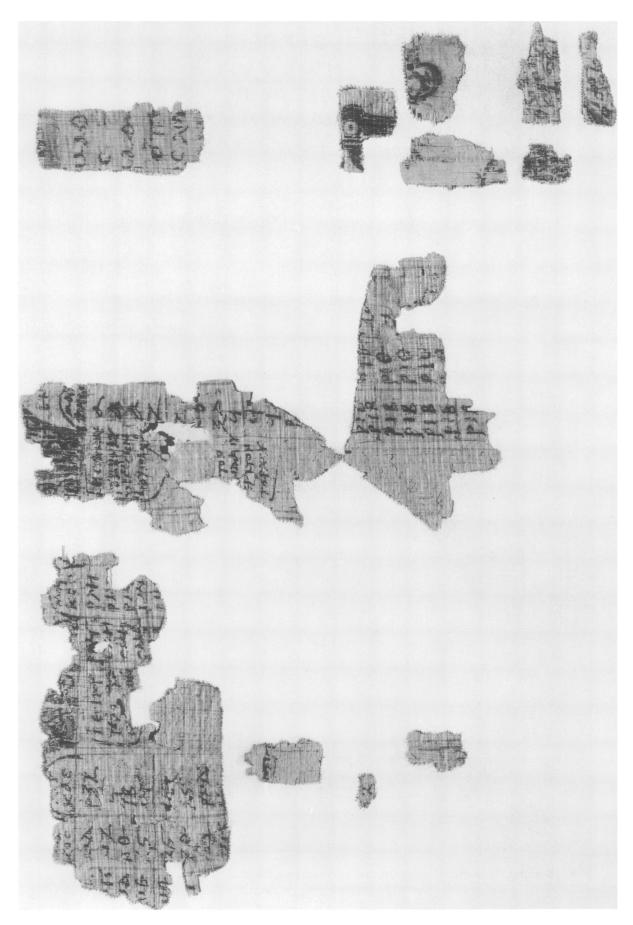
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, II, 251, no. 373, pl. x11.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>52</sup>*Ibid.*, II, 254, no. 381.

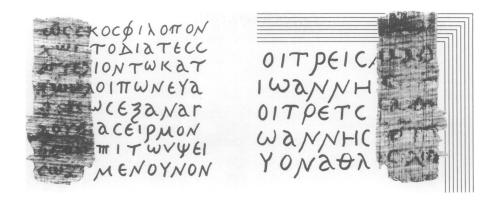
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>53</sup>B. Isaiae abbatis orationes, PG, XI, col. 1109.



 New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Egyptian Department, Inv. no. X455, Fragments of Gospel Book with Canon Tables. Recto (cf. text fig. A)



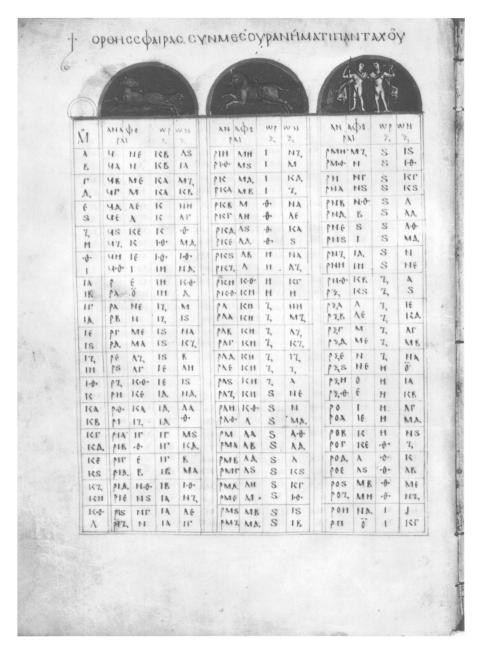
2. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Egyptian Department, Inv. no. X455, Fragments of Gospel Book with Canon Tables. Verso (cf. text. fig. B)



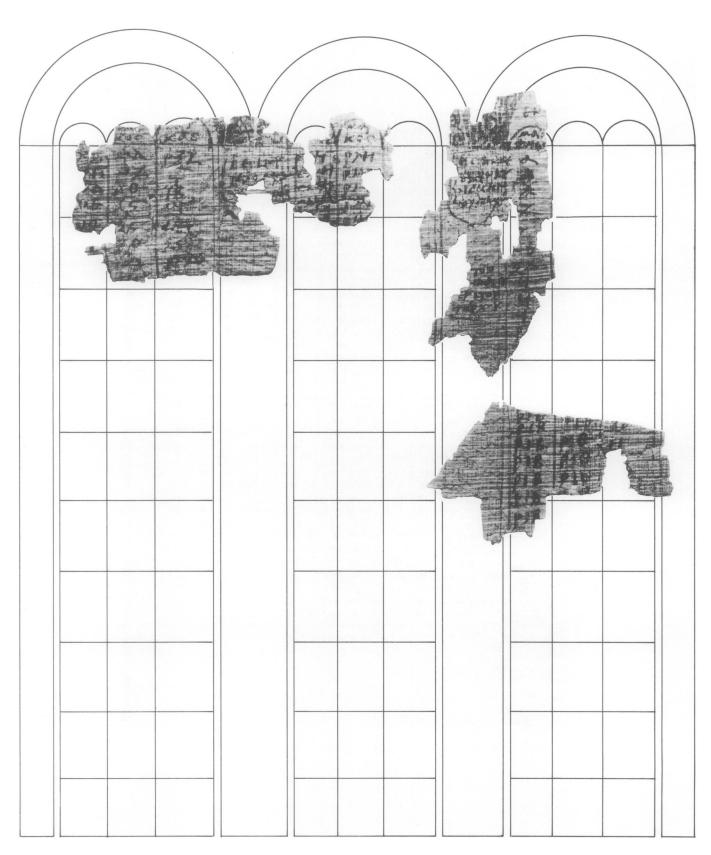
3. Eusebius' Letter to Carpianus. Comparison of a Recto with a Verso Fragment



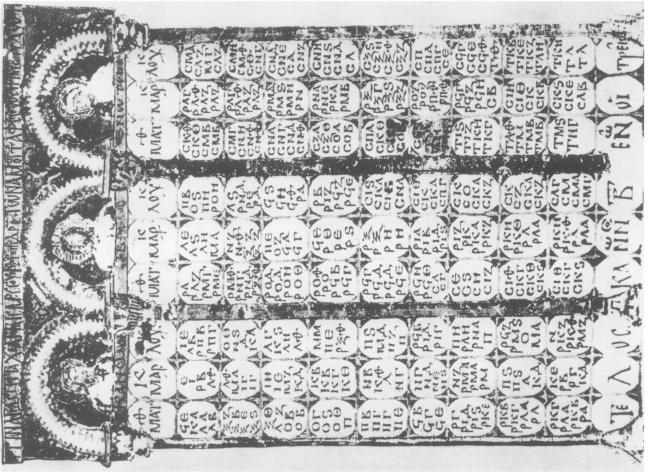
4. Rossano, Cathedral. Codex purpureus Rossanensis, fol. 6°, First Half of Letter to Carpianus

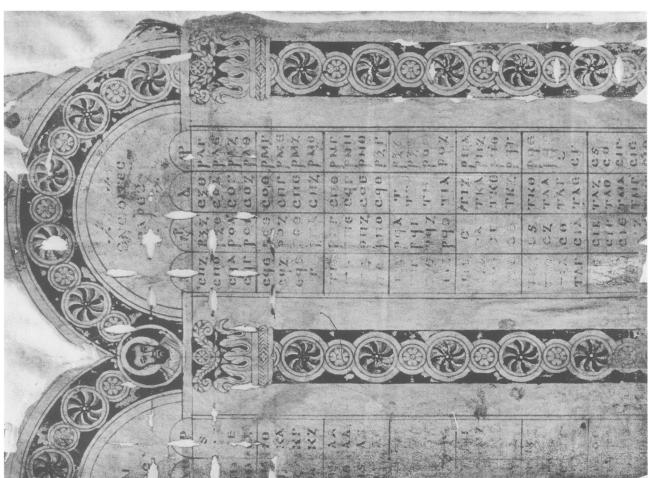


5. Biblioteca Vaticana, Vat. gr. 1291, fol. 22v, Astronomical Tables



6. Reconstruction of Canon Tables II and III, with Recto Fragments



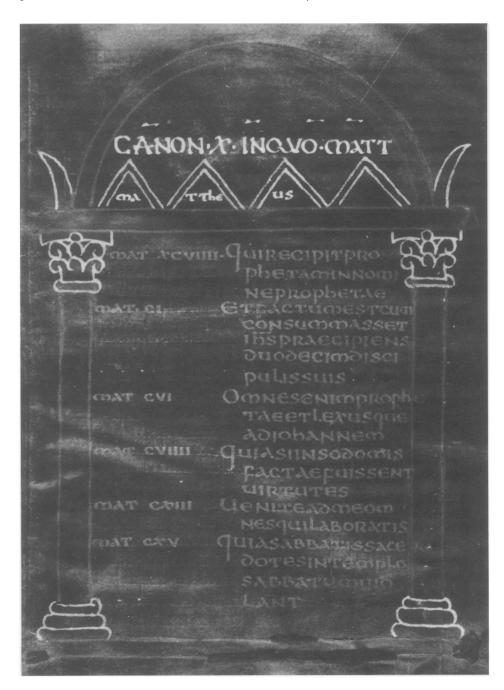


8. Berlin, Staatsbibliothek, Ham. 246, fol. 2

7. London, British Library, Add. 5111, fol. 10°



9. Bergamo, Biblioteca del Clerico di S. Alessandro, 227, Flyleaf



10. Brescia, Biblioteca Queriniana, s.n., fol. 14